

## **MINUTES**

**Village of Westmont**  
Regular Meeting  
**Economic Development Committee**  
**April 6, 2016, 9:00 am**

Westmont Village Hall Executive Session Room  
31 West Quincy Street, Westmont, IL

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Addington called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

### **2. Roll Call**

Jim Addington, Chairman-present  
Ron Gunter, Mayor - present  
Bruce Barker, Trustee - absent  
Harold Barry, Trustee - absent  
Bob Scott, Resident Representative - present  
Nancy Martens, Citizen Representative - absent  
Virginia Szymiski, Village Clerk - present  
Corinne Beller, Citizen Representative - absent  
Kevin Carey, School Representative - present  
Frank Brady, Business/Resident Representative - present  
Larry Forssberg, Chamber Executive Director - present  
Bill Kalafut, Business/Resident Representative - present  
Larry Kaufman, Director of Fire Prevention Bureau - present  
Steve May, Village Manager - present  
Gregg Pill, Business/Resident Representative - present  
Bob Fleck, Landscape Architect - present  
Thomas Mulhearn, Police Chief - present  
Dave Weiss, Fire Chief- absent  
Jill Ziegler, Community Development Director - present  
Larry McIntyre, Communications Director - absent  
Steve Riley, Deputy Chief - absent  
Mike Ramsey, Public Works Director - present  
Joe Hennerfeind, Planner II - present  
Nick Weinert, Building Commissioner - absent  
Rose Gross, Administrative Assistant -present  
Ed Richards, Planning & Zoning Chair - present

### **3. Pledge of Allegiance**

#### 4. Minutes

The minutes from the March 2, 2016 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Greg Pill and seconded by Frank Brady to approve the minutes.

#### 5. Old Business updates

##### A. Hilton Redevelopment project - 3500 Midwest Road

The B3 text amendment will be going before the Village Board on April 14th. If approved, it will go before Planning & Zoning in May.

**Chair Jim Addington** - Would like to see the golf Course excluded completely from the proposed text amendment so that residential would not be allowed to be built in the open space area.

**Mayor Ron Gunter** - Also would like to see the amount of property limited that would be subject to the text amendment.

**Manager Steve May** - Explained that the hotel property and the golf course are separate tax parcels, and passed around a map to visually demonstrate to the Committee.

#### 6. New Business

##### A. Comet Cleaners and Laundry - 309-311 North Cass Avenue.

Margaret Cox gave a presentation on opening a dry cleaners called Comet Cleaners and Laundry at 309-311 North Cass Ave. This will be the first Comet Cleaners in Illinois. It will be a “plant” store, meaning it would be opened first, with the possibility of two additional drop off stores located elsewhere within the Village in the next three (3) years. Ms. Cox opened by giving the Committee a little background on herself. Ms. Cox has been self employed since 2008; most recently she built and opened The Goddard School in neighboring Darien. Ms. Cox expressed that if she is able to build this Comet Cleaners in Westmont, she will attract more commerce to the Village. The Dry Cleaning industry is a service that is embedded in the community. It is a multi-billion dollar industry that has sustained the test of time. The current market is mainly “Mom and Pop” operations that are often referred to as just “Cleaners”. Often the buildings are old, and the businesses are sometimes dirty and not kept up. In the next five (5) years it is projected that the demand for dry cleaning will increase.

Comet Cleaners was established in 1957. Headquartered in Texas, Comet currently has over 200 franchise locations across the Southwest and Missouri. Comet Cleaners is a 100 percent organic and environmentally friendly store, that holds customer satisfaction as their number one goal. Trust and integrity are crucial for a dry cleaners to succeed. Comet is of the highest quality inside and out.

Prior to being self employed, Ms. Cox worked in the Banking industry for 20-25 years.

Ms. Cox spoke about staffing for the location. Being a single mother of three (3), Ms. Cox will hire an on-site manager to help with the day-to-day duties. An additional five (5) to eight (8) employees will be hired for plant operations. As the business builds, an additional five (5) to twelve (12) employees will be hired to manage and work at the facility.

The building will be 3,500 - 4,000 square feet with a drive-thru sliding door and 12 - 15 parking spaces. This will be a same-day facility; in by 9 am out by 5 pm. Customers are given their own laundry bags with tags to identify the clothes. There will also be a 24-hour drop off bin. Which is walled off and very aesthetic pleasing.

Ms. Cox expressed that she will be gathering more information in her due diligence on the property, but has already spoken with her architect regarding stormwater management, and believes that an underground tank with the required pipe flow needed for Westmont can be built. Ms. Cox may request a variance for the drive-thru sliding door. This drive-thru service is one of the unique qualities of the Comet Cleaners store. The interior will consist of pictures, wood work, TVs with a slideshow for the customers. The slideshow content will have tips for customers. Ms. Cox then showed the Committee pictures of several different Comet Cleaners stores from other locations.

**Manager Steve May** inquired about the need of a variance.

**Community Dev. Director Jill Ziegler - A special use** will likely be needed for the drive-thru door. The Village currently does not have any requirements on drive-thru cleaner; what exists is for drive-thru restaurants. This property is located in the TIF and B1/Downtown area.

**Chair Jim Addington** - Environmental concerns, several laws have changed in recent years. How does Comet comply with these laws? Water is recycled internally similar to a car wash.

**Ms. Margaret Cox** - All chemicals used at Comet Cleaners are environmentally safe. The owner of Comet contacted Exxon and worked with them to make a product that is environmentally safe.

**Chair Jim Addington** - Worked in banking for many years. Has personally financed a cleaners with a similar aspect, it did well. Concerned about stormwater, it is a large project/concern for the Village.

**Ms. Margaret Cox** - Gave information regarding research that was done when she built a local Goddard School in Darien in 2012.

**Chair Jim Addington** - Is this the two lots that are next to the white house?

**Comm. Director Jill Ziegler** - yes

**Chair Jim Addington** - Will this be a stand alone store?

**Ms. Margaret Cox** - Yes.

**Committee Member Greg Pill** - Will it be open 7 days a week?

**Ms. Margaret Cox** - Monday - Saturday 7 am - 7 pm

**Committee Member Greg Pill** - Will the drive-thru be on the North or South side? One story or two story? What will the outside be, brick/glass?

**Ms. Margaret Cox** - At this time is uncertain of which side the drive-thru will be on, will speak with architect. Will make as beautiful/attractive as possible. Personally likes brick buildings.

**Committee Member Greg Pill** - This will be at the entrance of our downtown community. This property is in our Comprehensive Plan District. The Village would like to see a building on this site go above and beyond, not just your standard design.

Is there enough depth on this property to go around the building for the drive-thru? Are there problems with curb cuts on Cass Ave.

**Comm. Dev. Director Jill Ziegler** - The curb cuts will need to be reviewed.

**Chief Tom Mulhearn** - There are two curb cuts.

**Public Works Director Mike Ramsey** - The water main is on that side of the street, so Cass Avenue will not have to be cut.

**P & Z Chair Ed Richards** - Having drive-thru on north side would stack up traffic on Cass Ave. Wrap around definitely best option.

**Ms. Margaret Cox** - Customers will have a drop off code.

**Committee Member Bob Scott** - Tie in with 7-Eleven's lot?

**Chair Jim Addington to Director of Fire Prevention Larry Kaufman** - issues at this point from the Fire Department's point of view? This will have a separate Fire review due to the type of business. Building will need to be sprinkled.

**Ms. Margaret Cox** - This will be the first Comet Cleaners in Illinois. There will be a set price, but special deals on (possibly) Tuesdays & Thursdays. All items are organic, including the bags customers receive to put their clothes in. Will speak with architect and work with the Village on all issues.

**Vote** - Greg Pill made the motion, seconded by Ed Richards.  
All in favor - yes

## **7. Other information**

### **Update from Larry Forssberg -**

Provided an article about apartments and the multi-family market and how this impacts Westmont. Upscale apartments are getting more common. There is currently a large market for apartments and the freedom of not being tied down to a house. Millennials are the focus market.

P & Z Chair Ed Richards - prefers condos over apartments.

Hilton - Currently has a 20+ year lease for the golf course. High interest in renovating the golf course, intending to make it a championship course. Discussed the parking issue for the proposed luxury apartment homes. Currently during the week the parking lot is quite empty, however, if there is a special event the parking lot is packed. The Harp Group will have to prove that the parking projected for the new apartment homes will be satisfactory.

The Westmont Chamber Awards Dinner will be on April 25th.

**Mariano's** - Exceptional first week: 50,000 - 60,000 customers. On opening day, Tuesday, March 15th, a new store record was set for the number of register receipts for one day. That Sunday, March 20th, a new store record was set for total dollar amount. Bob Mariano was present everyday that first week. Mr. Mariano would not only greet customers as they entered, but offer to help them find items. There is a large comparison of Mariano's to Whole Foods, some discussion on whether the organic food selection is better at Whole Foods. Chicago Checkbook Magazine did a grocery store comparison and found that Mariano's is cheaper than Jewel.

**Committee Member Greg Pill** - Recently the Chicago Tribune had an article on organic farming in the DeKalb area that is specific to Mariano's. The farm is set up to be harvested year round, by fall they plan on expanding their growing area to 7.2 acres.

New Mediterranean Restaurant located at 31 N. Cass Ave. - will be owned by Dr. Alhusani. Currently working with Sweet and Savory to help find them a smaller location in Westmont.

Construction of the parking deck for Audi is progressing.  
Hilton - Lobby renovations will be completed by end of the month.

Discussion ensued on the Citgo gas station on Naperville Road and Cass Avenue. Owner previously stated that he wanted to just have a repair shop. Owner of the Citgo on Ogden Avenue decided not to pursue this station. Is this safe? Egress? Fire Prevention Director Larry Kaufman noted that the 300 square foot building only needs one egress. Chair Jim Addington stated this has been ongoing since the late 1980s to early 90s.

Committee Member Greg Pill inquired about the Express Oil issues, and also projected opening dates for Grill 89/Cucina Nova.

Community Director Jill Ziegler gave an update on Express Oil - there is a tax issue with extra parcel that staff is working on. Will look into Grill 89/Cucina Nova opening.

**Committee Member Gregg Pill** - Restaurant review- great feedback. This month's review is on Saffron. Back in January a review was done on Neat, on Friday and Saturday there is a one hour wait. The reviews online have more pictures and more information. Suggested that Committee Members on Facebook like and share the link, shop/dine/discover. The more this is done, the better for Westmont.

Voting recently finished for the month, there were 27 categories of restaurants, and 6,391 votes cast.

**Miscellaneous** - Manager Steve May - In conjunction with the Rules and regulations open meeting act, the committee members will all have westmont.il.gov e-mail addresses. Please no longer use your personal email addresses.

## **8. Adjourn -**

Motion to adjourn made by Frank Brady, and seconded by Bob Scott. Meeting adjourned at 10:14 am.